



### The American Flag In Indiana

We were far down a country road when the dog left his farmyard to come after us. The dog seemed afraid, yet continued to approach, barking and baring his teeth as he snarled. I wanted to turn around and walk back the other way but she said no, we should stay. We stood where we had stopped; fear rose in me like the American flag in Indiana. The dog would lunge out, flashing his teeth, then turn back, but return immediately to a position perhaps five feet closer each time. The dog was not ten feet from us when a car coming down the road caused him to run back. We ran down the road in the direction we had come, in the headlight of the car, then alongside the car and then, in a fitful silence, into the darkness.

Today I told her that if the dog had attacked, I would have tried to throw my coat over his face and mouth. I would have tried to pick him up with my right arm under his belly, my left holding the coat over his face and under his neck. Then I would have tried to pull his head back sharply, snapping his neck, killing him. "It's strange to hear you talk like this," she said, but then she smiled.

-- Robert Horan